

I have just finished reading an editorial column in Congressional Quarterly written by David S. Cloud, titled "Social Security Funds Not Immune Forever."

In that article he says what is the simple reality: "The longer Congress and the White House delay dealing with the deficit, the greater the threat to Social Security's long-term existence."

No one can seriously question the validity of that statement.

I hope that sometime between now and the time this Congress adjourns, we can get one more vote for the balanced budget amendment.

At this point, I ask unanimous consent to print the complete David Cloud editorial column in the RECORD.

The column follows:

**CQ ROUNDTABLE—SOCIAL SECURITY FUNDS  
NOT IMMUNE FOREVER**

(By David S. Cloud)

If Republicans and Democrats in Congress are as dedicated to eliminating the federal deficit as they profess, someday soon they will have to answer serious questions about the future of Social Security. Otherwise, neither party's promise to preserve Social Security—or to balance the budget—can be considered altogether credible.

Congressional debates about Social Security center almost entirely on charges that one party or the other is plotting to deny benefits to retirees or is looting the trust funds of payroll tax revenue. While deep cuts in Social Security are certainly possible in coming years, it won't happen because of some secret desire by elected officials; it will happen because Congress is left with no other choice.

The relationship between Social Security and the deficit is not obvious. Thanks to big payroll tax increases enacted in 1977 and 1983, Social Security recovered from near-bankruptcy and is now taking in more revenue from workers' paychecks than it pays out in benefits every year. The result is a growing trust fund balance, expected to be about \$900 billion by 2000, that many view as a nest egg to pay benefits for baby boomer retirees next century. The surplus is often used as justification for leaving Social Security alone.

There are indeed good reasons to view Social Security as unique. No other program has such a broad base or such a strongly implied contract: Workers sacrifice now in the form of payroll deductions for the security of benefits after they retire. And the program has an uncontested record of sharply reducing poverty among the elderly.

But defending Social Security in isolation from the rest of the federal budget is as misleading as it is enticing. Politicians are especially prone to try.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., has singled out Social Security as the only program immune from cuts as Republicans work to balance the budget by 2002. Senate Democrats recently killed the constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget after they failed to win special protections for Social Security.

But all this ignores a central fact: It is unlikely that the budget can be balanced without affecting a program that now constitutes more than a fifth of federal spending.

Why can't Social Security be left alone as long as it is self-financing? For openers, a program of Social Security's immensity—\$330 billion in fiscal 1994—consumes tax revenue that could otherwise go toward reducing the

deficit, if Congress didn't have to keep payroll taxes at such high levels to finance the Social Security system. Some of those benefits are going to retirees who, by any definition, are well-off. In 1990, families with income above \$100,000 received more than \$8 billion in Social Security benefits.

The logic of capturing some of that money for deficit reduction proved inescapable in 1993, when Congress raised taxes on some upper-income retirees by taxing more of their Social Security benefits. (House Republicans now want to repeal that tax increase.) There seems to be no appetite for undertaking a bolder attempt at scaling back Social Security benefits among recipients further down the income scale. The other option—increasing payroll taxes—does not seem likely.

Yet the longer Congress and the White House delay dealing with the deficit, the greater the threat to Social Security's long-term existence.

The reason rests with what is happening to all those surplus dollars Social Security is now accumulating. The trust funds are being invested in U.S. Treasury bonds, with the promise that the money plus interest will be paid back next century. In other words, the government is borrowing from the Social Security trust funds and eventually will have to repay those funds.

But continuation of massive borrowing from now until then will only make it harder to repay the obligations when the baby boomers retire.

When will this demographic crunch hit? Baby boomers will begin to retire around 2010. According to the 1994 Social Security Board of Trustees report, the trust funds will not run dry until 2036, absent further congressional action. But the fiscal strain will actually arrive much sooner—beginning around 2013, when the Social Security system starts drawing heavily on interest payments from the Treasury to pay for benefits.

If the federal government is still running a deficit, making those interest payments to the Social Security trust funds will necessitate a massive addition to government borrowing, or a big income tax increase.

All of the choices will be unappetizing—a mountain of additional debt, angry workers asked to more heavily subsidize retirees, or sharp cuts in Social Security benefits. And any effort by today's politicians to segregate Social Security from the rest of the budget will matter not a whit.●

**STEWART L. BELL: A NEW FACE  
IN POLITICS**

● Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to rise today to congratulate a good friend of mine and of the State of Nevada for a lifetime of outstanding achievement, Clark County District Attorney Stewart Bell.

Stew Bell has been a resident of southern Nevada since 1954. He graduated from Western High School with honors in 1963 while also distinguishing himself as the Nevada State High School Mathematics Champion. In 1967, he graduated with distinction from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and, 3 years later, was awarded a Juris Doctorate from UCLA.

He returned to Las Vegas to work in the Clark County Public Defender's Office and, in 1973, he went into private practice and became a senior partner of one of the State's most prestigious firms.

Throughout his entire legal career, Stew Bell has distinguished himself as an outstanding trial attorney, defending thousands of criminal, civil, business, and domestic cases. He is one of the few attorneys to receive the Martindale-Hubbell A V Rating, the highest possible attorney rating for professional competence and ethics.

In addition to professional achievements, Stew Bell has also been a committed leader in the legal and civic community of Nevada. He has served as president and vice president of both the Nevada bar and the Clark County Bar Associations, on numerous State legal panels, as a court appointed special prosecutor, and as an alternate municipal judge and juvenile court referee.

Stew has also contributed hundreds of hours to youth programs such as the Variety Club for Handicapped Children, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Vegas Girls Soccer League. His list of civic achievements is too lengthy to enumerate, and I have always been amazed at his ability to juggle his civic, church, family, and professional responsibilities. Yet he has always done so with energy, enthusiasm, and zest.

A dedicated family man, Stew is married to Jeanne Bell and together, they have raised four wonderful children: Linda, a recent graduate of the University of San Diego School of Law; Kristen, who is currently attending the University of Nevada, Reno; Stephen, a student at Bonanza High School, and Greg, who is attending Cashman Junior High.

Last year, Stew Bell entered into his first political campaign, for the prestigious position of district attorney for Clark County. Because of his earnest reputation and his commitment to hard work, Stew was able to win the election handily.

On Sunday, April 2, the Paradise Democratic Club will be honoring Stewart Bell with the "Outstanding Democrat of the Year Award." I can think of no one more deserving of this award. Stew Bell represents all that is good about public service, and he is an excellent role model for the children and adults of our State.●

**PERSPECTIVE: BACKS DR. HENRY  
FOSTER'S NOMINATION**

● Mr. SIMON. Mr. President, the President of the United States has nominated Dr. Henry Foster to become Surgeon General of the United States.

I have had the chance to visit with him and see him at one public meeting in action, and I have been favorably impressed.

I believe there has been great distortion of who he is and what he stands for.

I was interested in seeing in the Chicago Defender the other day, a statement by the president of Fisk University on the Henry Foster nomination.

Because of its insights, I ask that the statement be printed in the RECORD.

The statement follows:

[From the Chicago Defender, Mar. 13, 1995]

# BACKS DR. HENRY FOSTER'S NOMINATION

(By Dr. Henry Ponder)

I support Dr. Henry Foster's nomination to become the next surgeon general of the United States.

I would speak against the three most-mentioned reasons why he should not be confirmed. They are: (1) the number of abortion procedures he has performed over the last 30 years; (2) his integrity; and (3) the bungling of his nomination by the White House.

Regarding the first point, it is yet to be proven that Foster committed any crime or illegalities in the years that he has practiced medicine as one of America's premier board-certified obstetrician/gynecologists.

It must be reiterated that abortion is not considered illegal in America for, under *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court has ruled that abortion procedures performed by a doctor, however abhorrent and immoral it is to a sizable portion of Americans, is still constitutionally acceptable. Until that ruling is reversed, Foster and any number of other doctors will not be in violation of the law.

Ironically, Foster pointed out recently on "Nightline" with Ted Koppel, that he "abhors abortion." In cases which he had to perform abortion procedures, he said they were only "for rape, incest and saving the life of the mother." Should a man be castigated for something his society allows or permits as lawful, or should his society confer good behavior upon him for being law-abiding? I think rational men and women would agree with the latter rather than the former.

It can be clearly shown that Foster has done nothing wrong, illegal or unconstitutional. He has stayed within the confines of his professional ethical code and parameters and societal jurisprudence. He should be commended and not assailed.

The second issue being used to stop Foster's nomination is integrity. It is said that, at different times, Foster said he performed about 12, 39 or some 700 abortions over the last 30 years. Foster said that he misspoke about the number of abortion procedures he has performed in his career. How many of us have not misspoken and corrected ourselves when we learned the facts?

I think the worst kind of man is the one who refuses upon learning he is mistaken to correct himself. Foster, before the nation and on "Nightline," stated that upon reflection and in hindsight, he should have consulted his records more thoroughly about it. When Foster had the chance to reexamine his files, he, as any man with integrity will do, correct himself and apologized for the error.

This should not taint one's character. It should rather brighten it. But, unfortunately, in today's America, contrition on the part of anyone is a sign of "a damaged good" that is irreparable.

Even the good book, the Holy Bible, says that one should be forgiven in their contrition. Integrity to me is being able to say you are wrong when you discover that you are.

Foster should not be raked over the coals for admitting error, if in the process, he sets his records straight.

Thirdly, there is no question that the White House bungled this nomination. They have said as much. This whole affair could have been handled better in a straight and clearer manner by presenting Foster as a nationally renowned medical practitioner who, over 30 years, has performed abortion procedures to save the life of the mother, or due to rape or incest. It would also have been communicated that he abhors abortions and only performed them under the rarest of such cases.

I accept the statements by the president's staff that they made a mistake in handling

the nomination and concur with them that the strong credentials Foster brings to the position of surgeon general outweighs presidential staff bungling and error or at worst misjudgment.

I wholeheartedly support Foster's nomination and I ask the Senate to confirm him and for the country to stand by the president's excellent choice. He shouldn't be punished or scapegoated for the controversy and the tensions that abortion brings to the political arena for there are rational people on both sides of the battle.

Better yet, there are some who are working to eliminate at the root, the instances that lead to teenage pregnancy. Foster is a general in this army and he deserves to be confirmed as surgeon general. ●

## PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I recently returned from a short visit to Ireland, Northern Ireland, and London, England, where I met with government officials and representatives of the political parties in Northern Ireland, on developments in the peace process there. This is an exciting time in Northern Ireland, where a ceasefire is holding for the first time in a quarter century. I ask that the report of my trip be printed in the RECORD.

The report follows:

CODEL LEAHY—TRIP REPORT, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, ENGLAND, FEBRUARY 17-21

From February 17-21, I traveled to the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and London, England, to meet with leaders of Irish and British Governments and representatives of the political parties in Northern Ireland, and to observe the use of funds administered by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). In London, in addition to meeting with British and American officials on developments in Northern Ireland, I also discussed efforts to limit the proliferation and use of antipersonnel landmines. I was accompanied by Tim Rieser and Kevin McDonald of my personal staff. Travel was by commercial air and rental car.

### INTRODUCTION

I have closely followed the situation in Northern Ireland for many years. I was among those who last year urged President Clinton to grant Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, the political arm of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a visa to travel to the U.S. That decision is widely credited with having led to the IRA ceasefire and the peace process that is now unfolding.

The timing of this trip was important because of developments in Northern Ireland since the December 1993 Joint Declaration between former Irish Prime Minister Reynolds and British Prime Minister Majors. That Declaration initiated the latest attempt to resolve the Northern Ireland conflict which has claimed over 3,200 lives in the past 25 years. Most importantly, the two leaders agreed that any change in the status of the North could only occur with the consent of a majority of the people there.

In August 1994, shortly after Gerry Adams received a visa to visit the U.S., the IRA announced a unilateral ceasefire which led to October cease-fires by Protestant paramilitary groups. Since then, informal talks have been conducted between the Irish Government and Sinn Fein. I arrived in the Republic just six days before the publication of a controversial "Framework Document," which contains proposals put forth jointly by

Irish and British Governments aimed at bringing about a permanent settlement of the conflict.

### DUBLIN

Meeting with Tainiste Dick Spring: I arrived in Dublin on February 17. Senator George Mitchell, who last December was appointed the President's Special Advisor on Economic Initiatives in Ireland, was also in Dublin that day accompanied by a delegation of officials from the White House and Commerce Department, and our two delegations met over lunch with Tainiste Dick Spring. Our discussions focused on the Framework Document, which Tainiste Spring has had a central role in negotiating, and plans for the May 1995 Trade and Investment Conference.

Representatives of the Irish and American business communities, and the political parties, will meet in Washington over a three day period to discuss potential American-Irish joint ventures and other investment opportunities in the Republic and Northern Ireland.

There is universal agreement among all factions that economic development, especially in areas of high unemployment in the North, is key to any lasting peace since there is a direct correlation between high levels of unemployment and violence. There is also widespread recognition of the crucial role that the United States can play in promoting economic investment. Four areas with high potential have already been identified: tourism, food processing; pharmaceuticals; and telecommunications.

Senator Mitchell, after quoting President Franklin Roosevelt that "the best social program is a job," stressed that this is to be an economic conference, not a political conference, although it is inevitable that politics will play a part. Ireland has much to recommend it, including its highly trained, English-speaking workforce and location at the gateway to 350 million European consumers. Setting up follow-up mechanisms to assist potential investors will be particularly important. Senator Mitchell and I stressed that while the U.S. can help facilitate investment in Northern Ireland, this is a long-term endeavor which depends on the sustained efforts of all the people on the island.

There was also a general discussion about the important role the International Fund for Ireland has played in bringing economic development to disadvantaged areas during a period when the Northern Ireland violence caused many potential investors to go elsewhere.

Address to peace and Reconciliation Forum: Shortly after the IRA ceasefire, the Irish Government initiated a "Peace and Reconciliation Forum" as a way to quickly bring Sinn Fein into informal discussions with the government and other political parties. Although the Unionist parties complained that the Forum was an Irish Government affair and declined to participate, the Forum has provided a bridge between the ceasefire and formal all-party talks which are anticipated in the future.

Senator Mitchell and I were each invited to address the Forum, which is held each Friday at Dublin Castle. Among the audience of approximately two hundred were Tainiste Spring of the Irish Government, Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein, and John Alderdice of the Alliance Party. After introductions by Forum Chair Judge Catherine McGinness and Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith, I explained that I had come at this pivotal time to give encouragement to all the parties involved in the peace process, and to emphasize that the United States would fully support their efforts in an even-handed way. I